

READYWISCONSIN RELEASE: Step toward safety while you spring forward this weekend

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For more information on carbon monoxide poisoning, visit:
<https://dma.wi.gov/DMA/wemnews/2020wemnews/ready200304>

MADISON, Wis. – As you set the clocks forward this weekend, ReadyWisconsin is encouraging you to test the smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in your home and replace the batteries. With tornado and severe thunderstorm seasons approaching, it's also a great time to update your emergency kits.

“For you and your family, take the opportunity this weekend to replace your batteries and hit the test button on your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors,” said Wisconsin Emergency Management Administrator Darrel L. Williams, Ph.D. “It’s also a great time to double check your emergency supply kits for supplies that need to be replaced.”

Daylight saving time begins Sunday, March 8 at 2 a.m.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, three out of every five fire deaths in homes were because there were no smoke alarms (40 percent) or smoke alarms weren’t working (17 percent).

Furnaces are also getting a workout during Wisconsin winters, which can increase the risk of carbon monoxide leaks in the home. Carbon monoxide poisoning sends about 500 Wisconsinites to the emergency room each year according to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services.

Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning include a dull headache, weakness, dizziness, nausea or vomiting, shortness of breath, confusion, blurred vision and loss of consciousness. At high levels, carbon monoxide can kill within minutes. If you suspect you or someone may be experiencing carbon monoxide poisoning, or your detector sounds an alarm, go outside immediately and call 911.

To protect yourself and your family from fires or carbon monoxide, follow these safety tips:

- It’s the law in Wisconsin to have smoke detectors on every level in a home or duplex, including the basement. Detectors can be purchased at most hardware stores. Replace your smoke detectors every ten years and carbon monoxide detectors every five years.
- Have your furnace or wood-burning stove inspected annually. Hire a professional to make sure it is functionally sound and vents properly outside the home.
- Generators should be run at a safe distance (at least 20 feet) from the home. Never run a generator in the home or garage, or right next to windows or doors.
- Do not use a gas or electric oven to warm your home. A gas oven may go out, leading to carbon monoxide poisoning. An electric oven was not designed for space heating.

· Never use outdoor sources to warm your home including a gasoline or propane heater or a grill (gas or charcoal). Any heating system that burns fuel produces carbon monoxide.

If you have an emergency kit at home, now is a great time to check for expired products or items that may have been borrowed for other purposes and need to be replaced. Pay attention to items such as batteries, first aid supplies, and food, which should all be replaced regularly.

For tips on emergency preparedness: <http://readywisconsin.wi.gov>. You can also follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/readywisconsin) and Twitter (www.twitter.com/readywisconsin).

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